



For Immediate Release
 September 22, 2009

Contact: Bob Jacobson, 608-284-0580 ext. 303
 bjacobson@wccf.org

New Census Data: 9.1% of Wisconsin Residents Uninsured in 2008
 Statewide Median Income Stagnant

Wisconsin remains a national leader on health care coverage, but is struggling on income and other indicators, according to data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. The American Community Survey (ACS), an annual survey of some 3 million households nationwide, offers a snapshot of 2008 household characteristics on the state level, as well as county-level data for larger communities. Today’s release includes data on health insurance coverage, household income, and housing costs.

This is the first time the ACS has included data on health insurance coverage. Wisconsin remains a national leader in making health insurance available to residents. 9.1% of residents went without health insurance for all or part of 2008, tied for fifth best in the nation. Among the state's largest counties, both the highest and lowest rates of uninsured were in the Milwaukee area. Milwaukee County had the highest rate of uninsured at 12.1%, while Waukesha and Ozaukee counties had the lowest uninsured rates at 4.8% each. The statewide rate was even better for uninsured children. Just 5.2% of Wisconsin kids were uninsured in 2008.

“Thanks to our longstanding commitment to innovative programs like BadgerCare Plus, we’re very close to reaching the ultimate goal of covering all kids,” said Jim Moeser, acting executive director of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. “But we can’t afford to let up. People are losing their employer-sponsored coverage due to the recession. We need to make sure families have access to good health care coverage regardless of how the economy fluctuates.”

(Please note that the table above reflects only the state’s largest counties. ACS sample sizes for smaller counties are not large enough to provide reliable county-level data.)

	Residents without insurance	Under age 18 without insurance
Brown County, Wisconsin	8.4%	2.2%
Dane County, Wisconsin	7.7%	3.1%
Dodge County, Wisconsin	6.8%	1.8%
Eau Claire County, Wisconsin	9.3%	5.0%
Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin	5.4%	2.2%
Jefferson County, Wisconsin	8.5%	3.4%
Kenosha County, Wisconsin	9.7%	4.0%
La Crosse County, Wisconsin	6.4%	2.9%
Manitowoc County, Wisconsin	8.5%	6.2%

Marathon County, Wisconsin	8.4%	4.6%
Milwaukee County, Wisconsin	12.1%	6.3%
Outagamie County, Wisconsin	7.9%	3.4%
Ozaukee County, Wisconsin	4.8%	2.3%
Portage County, Wisconsin	8.2%	4.4%
Racine County, Wisconsin	10.2%	5.2%
Rock County, Wisconsin	9.8%	6.3%
St. Croix County, Wisconsin	7.5%	7.5%
Sheboygan County, Wisconsin	6.9%	1.5%
Walworth County, Wisconsin	9.1%	3.4%
Washington County, Wisconsin	6.6%	4.5%
Waukesha County, Wisconsin	4.8%	2.0%
Winnebago County, Wisconsin	7.9%	1.9%
Wood County, Wisconsin	8.0%	4.7%
Wisconsin	9.1%	5.2%

Median household income in Wisconsin declined from \$52,519 in 2007 to \$52,094 in 2008. The 2008 figure ranked Wisconsin 22nd among the states, and was very close to the national median. While this decline was not statistically significant, it continues a downward trend since 2000 when adjusted for inflation. The state’s highest-income county in 2008 was Waukesha with median income of \$75,372. The county with the lowest median household income was Wood, at \$44,149. Wisconsin continues to have one of the nation’s largest income disparities between White and African American Households.

“The continuing decline in household income is a huge concern,” said Moeser. “Family income is one of the most reliable indicators of child well-being. As the economy rebounds from the recession, we must focus on creating the kinds of jobs that pay a family-supporting wage, and make sure parents have access to the sorts of education and job training that will qualify them for those good-paying jobs. This is especially true in parts of the state where a lot of disadvantaged families and people of color live.”

	2008 Median Income
All households	\$52,094
White	\$53,918
Black/African American	\$30,330
Asian	\$55,113
Hispanic/Latino	\$37,801

Wisconsin was one of 22 states that saw a decline in median home values in 2008. The median value of a home statewide in 2008 was \$173,300, down from \$175,200 in 2007. Eight Midwestern states experienced declines in median home value.